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. No. 68.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER

OF

STATE AID AND PENSIONS.

FOR THE YEAR 1902.



BOSTON:
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Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF STATE AID AND PENSIONS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, Jan. 13, 1903.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.

I have the honor to present the annual report of the department of State Aid and Pensions, the part relating to State aid being for the year 1901 and that relating to pensions covering the year 1902.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES W. HASTINGS,
Commissioner of State Aid and Pensions.

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MEMORANDUM OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SUBJECT: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
The Board of Directors has the honor to present the annual report of the company for the year ending December 31, 1971. The report contains a full and complete statement of the company's financial condition and operations for the year. The Board of Directors is pleased to report that the company has achieved a record year of performance, with a significant increase in sales and a corresponding increase in profits. The Board of Directors is confident that the company's strong financial position and excellent management will enable it to continue to grow and prosper in the future.

Very Respectfully,

THEATRE OF THE CITY
New York, N.Y.

REPORT.

STATE AID DEPARTMENT.

Disbursements of State and military aid by the 353 cities and towns of the Commonwealth, under chapters 374 and 372, Acts of 1899, and for the burial of indigent soldiers, sailors and marines, their wives, widows and dependent mothers, were made as follows : —

State aid to soldiers and dependents, civil war, . . .	\$684,616 02
State aid to soldiers and dependents, war with Spain, . . .	4,142 00
Military aid to soldiers and sailors, civil war, . . .	47,009 00
Military aid to soldiers and sailors, war with Spain, . . .	5,092 81
Burial expenses of indigent soldiers and dependents, . . .	27,870 65

Total for 1901, \$768,730 48

These figures show an expenditure in 1901 over 1900 of \$19,368.55, of which sum about \$16,000 was caused by increase of disbursements to State aid cases, and little more than \$3,000 in consequence of increased number of burials.

Recipients of State aid on account of the civil war are classified as follows : —

Pensioned soldiers and sailors,	6,989	Increase of 141
Wives of same,	853	Increase of 53
Widows of same,	6,340	Increase of 199
Dependent mothers,	287	Decrease of 29
Dependent fathers,	9	Decrease of 5
Army nurses,	12	Increase of 4

14,490

Net increase of cases during 1901, 363.

Average cost to State per person aided, per annum, slightly over \$47.

Recipients of State aid on account of the war with Spain are classified as follows : —

Pensioned soldiers,	16
Widows,	29
Dependent mothers,	20
Dependent fathers,	5
Children under fourteen,	32
<hr/>	
Total,	102

A slight decrease in the number aided in 1900.

Military aid was extended to 853 soldiers and sailors of the civil war, and to 87 of the war with Spain, at an expense to the State of \$52,101.81,—a decrease of \$320.67 from the previous year. It is probable that expenditures of military aid will gradually decrease, by reason of deaths and the receipt of pensions by the veterans.

The services of Surgeon-General Robert A. Blood, who was in attendance two days of each week to examine applicants for military aid, were of great assistance to the commissioners in helping to determine the nature and extent of disabilities claimed and the amount of aid to be granted.

The work of the department has steadily increased, as was natural in view of the increased number of applicants and the greater number of deaths, but no addition was made to the clerical force or to the number of agents.

Four agents, three male and one female, have been constantly employed investigating the condition, needs, etc., of recipients of State and military aid, visiting cities and towns to correct errors in methods of disbursing aid, and instructing burial agents in their duties connected with the burial of soldiers and their dependents.

Over 6,000 individual examinations and consultations were made by the agents along these lines.

The law of April 21, chapter 356, Acts of 1898, charged the Commissioners of State Aid with the duty of investigating and deciding cases of appeal of applicants for soldiers' relief from the action of the municipal authorities, where they failed to furnish such relief.

Much additional work was involved in consideration of these appeals, getting at the bottom of the trouble and making

equitable decisions. It may be said, however, that the decisions of the Board, after due consideration of the merits of each case, have been generally satisfactory to all concerned.

Burial Expenses of Indigent Soldiers and their Wives, Widows and Mothers.

The expense to the State in 1901 for the burial of 631 soldiers, 123 widows, 36 wives and 9 mothers, making a total of 799 persons, was \$27,870.65,—an increase of 106 cases and \$3,738.30 in expense over 1900. Average expense per burial, \$34.88.

By the provisions of chapter 292, Acts of 1902, soldiers, sailors and marines of the war with Spain, and their wives, widows and dependent mothers, were made eligible to receive the benefits of the burial law the same as veterans of the civil war. A statement of the number and expense of such cases will be found in the annual report for 1902.

Total Payments of State Aid.

The total payments by the Commonwealth for State and military aid and burial of indigent soldiers and sailors, including appropriations made by the General Court toward maintenance of the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts from 1861 to the close of 1901,		\$27,524,316 67
State and military aid and burial of soldiers and sailors on account of 1901,		768,730 48
Special laws,	\$1,828 00	
Soldiers' Home,	35,000 00	
		<hr/>
		36,828 00
Total to Jan. 1, 1903,		\$28,347,875 15

PENSION DEPARTMENT.

The legislative act, chapter 192 of the Acts of 1902, abolished the Board of Commissioners of State Aid and the office of State Pension Agent, and directed the appointment by the Governor and Council of a commissioner and deputy commissioner of State Aid and Pensions, the commissioner to have the powers and duties heretofore conferred and imposed upon the Board of Commissioners of State Aid and the State Pension Agent.

The Governor having appointed Charles W. Hastings commissioner, and Joseph B. Parsons deputy commissioner, the appointees at once qualified and entered upon their duties under the new law on July 1, 1902, Colonel Parsons continuing in charge, as formerly, of the pension and claim business of the department.

A personal interview with the United States Commissioner of Pensions by Deputy Commissioner Parsons, and the filing of certificates of appointment, etc., at once placed the office in line of recognition, and the commissioner takes pleasure in acknowledging the courtesies extended to Colonel Parsons, and through him to the Commonwealth, by the officials of the Pension Bureau at Washington.

The merging of the pension agency with the department of State aid, making one homogeneous department devoted to the interests of veteran soldiers, sailors and their dependents, was an eminently practical measure, tending to facilitate and economize the work of adjusting pension and other claims against the federal government.

With the exception of one clerk in the pension agency, who was retired when the offices were united, the clerical force of the department remains unchanged.

In readjusting the clerical service, more work and greater responsibility were placed upon one or two of the clerks, and I respectfully recommend that the annual salary of the female clerk responsible for the auditing of the returns of payments by cities and towns be raised from \$840 to \$1,000.

Attention is directed to the advisability of amending chapter 35, Revised Laws, so that the claims for pensions, back pay, etc., of soldiers and dependents, filed in this office, shall not be considered public documents to which any citizen is entitled to have access.

The claimants for pensions through the State pension agency have a right to expect that their interests shall, at least, be as safely guarded as they would be in the hands of a private claim agent. The names and addresses of applicants for pensions, together with the declarations, certificates and affidavits accompanying them, are for the information of the commissioner to use in the discharge of his duty in expediting claims

against the United States government, and, being in the nature of confidential communications, should be open to the inspection of the general public only upon consent of the claimant and the commissioner.

Business transacted in 1902.

Total number of claims received,	1,577
Number of claims allowed,	725
Number of claims rejected,	425
Amount collected,	\$75,157 24
Pension vouchers executed,	16,457

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES W. HASTINGS,

Commissioner of State Aid and Pensions.

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